Interview with [M2]

M = Ministerial participant

The following conventions are used in transcription of spoken interviews:

[replacement information in square brackets]

[redacted information in grey in square brackets]

[?] = unintelligible missing word(s); immediately following word = unclear[?]

[#] = redacted numerical information

CAPITALS to signify emphasis in speaking

((Extraneous information in double brackets))

Researcher  
Yeah. So um just to start to warm up a bit, I was wondering if you could tell me something about your role in the [ministerial unit] and how it relates to your research interests and expertise. So is that OK as a way to kind of warm up?

[M2]  
Yes, sure. I've been in the [ministerial unit] for [#] years, nearly now. [Redacted identifying information.]

And my role in the [ministerial unit] is and[?] [unit]. [Redacted identifying information.] But with some funding and controlling, there is every few years this performance agreement negotiations. The last one had been concluded last year for 2022 and 2024, and now the big issue is inflation as it might be in other places too, but the universities in Austria, [redacted identifying information] are seems to be especially seem to be especially also Austrian universities when when they won't get compensated for inflation at least partly, I think this will be politically problematic. But we know some some amounts now and then we will see.

Researcher  
When you say when you say performance agreement, do you mean with a particular university or with like all public universities.

[M2]  
It’s with all public universities. It has been concluded like by law it has to be at the, it had to be at the end of the last year. But it's, the negotiations are with with every individual university, so the negotiation in itself with this development plan interaction is with individual universities and is going on from end of September until beginning of December. We could say every three years and then afterwards um there are twice a year these accompanying talks where we control it for universities, achievements in, in the within the performance agreement.

But this is also based on the intellectual capital report, the ‘Wissensbilanz’, and this is the the the central monitoring tool, we could say also for these indicators that have been more prominent now in funding, like the active students and the, the, the, the staff and with within this, I would say that there is a clear connection between performance agreement and and funding.

But it's it's not like this that in that previously like 15 years ago or earlier when there had been lower autonomy for Austrian universities, that there are funds for every project allocated. So this is no more the case, it's more steering at the distance I would say and more, more more on the global level and we don't alloc- it's really good, really, really impossible I think to allocate for every project some some specific funds, but as a whole, with the funding as as as you mentioned, these are these are global budgets. So how they distributed within the universities, we don't know, we are we even may not be interested in this exactly, but we get some feedback from the cost accounting and this is new this year there will be for for first published data on on on ‘Kosten und Leistungsregelung’ how is it in English? Cost and

Researcher  
Performance

[M2]

Performance accounting maybe? Yeah. I don't have the exact term now and you know for this in English, but there will be costs per students and the costs per staff um both. And this gives us another perspective on university um funding processing.

Researcher

And is that is that yearly like the ‘Wissensbilanz’ is yearly, isn't it? Every year I think.

[M2]

Hm-hm. It's yearly, too. That’s right.

Researcher

So that allows you to adjust the funds based on the performance agreements? Or how does it work?

[M2]

Um partly partly yes, it has been for the first case in the last performance agreement period, that the universities could not fulfill some targets for the active student in some subject areas, and then there had been financial penalties for this, for for, for some individual university it had been a high financial penalty because the the gap between before between agreement and achievement was very high. But umm, in in in some it has not been that high, but it has been for the first time that the that the Ministry had been deducting sums for this. But on the other way, it it had been decided to to um um give the funds again to the universities to hand them out, and this this has been based on a little other distribution um um distribution formula as it has had been in the performance agreement, so the deductions were not were not equally distributed as the as the funds newly allocated based on these deductions.

But in the amount it had been the same. So there were different universities um profiting from this that there had been deducted for some universities.

Researcher

OK, so some universities had a a lowered amount um on the basis of the target students and some of them had an additional amount added.

[M2]

Hm-hm, the the the these amounts had been reallocated and the allocate allocation mechanism of this new amount had been different than than it had been in the performance agreement. It is where other criteria criteria used than in the performance agreement, for example, how they reported on teaching quality and something like this. I can't remember exactly, but it's not, the the the exact formula like in the performance agreement they can use.

Researcher  
So basically, they are readjustments that are ongoing through other monitoring tools.

[M2]  
Umm, no. That had been also the the the in base base is the intellectual capital reports had been the the the the the main report um um tool also for this, but um not. It had been not this hard indicators like as we could call it the active student and staff. It had been other indicators from the performan- from the, from the intellectual capital reports and some other report um tools they also had to implement since autonomy like especially [?] financial autonomy had been the balance sheet. This is also one strength we we um um in our division we we work on.

Researcher

And the balance sheet is a yearly sheet as well?

[M2]

Hmhm that’s true.

Researcher

Is that part of the ‘Wissensbilanz’ or it’s separate?

[M2]

No it's it's it's they are separate, OK, they are so, it's separate divisions, they the universities report to. So this is separate I would say completely.

Researcher

Is it submitted at the same time as the ‘Wissensbilanz’ as a kind exercise?

[M2]

Uh-huh. It's similar I think the ‘Wissensbilanz’ has to be in the uni- in at the Ministry at the end of April. And the balance sheet has had has to be there at the end of May. So this is one month month different. But in in reality sometimes this goes this goes together with either because universities are earlier with the balance sheets or a little later with intellectual capital reports.

Researcher  
Does the financial year in Austria start in April as well.

[M2]  
No, that's not the case with the balance sheet. It's because the balance sheet finished on 31st of December and then they had to revise it with the with the financial advisor and with some rating agency before coming to us. And then also the university council has has to approve it and then it's coming to us. So there are some university processes that take the months between January, January and April, roughly or January and May.

Researcher

So am I right in thinking that, and when you mentioned target students, that would be in the performance agreement?

[M2]  
Hm-hm. That's true.

Researcher  
That’s what you’re aiming at in terms of target, and that relates to the funding formula then because some of it's allocated for students and active students within that formula?

[M2]

Hm-hm. That's true. It's so there, there are two separate chapters within the performance agreements, the one is where these numbers are fixed and the other one is where these numbers are combined with amount sums of of money and then with these multiplication you get the the funds and the the funds are summed up in the performance agreement too. So it's publicly visible which how many funds each university gets, because they are the published uh performance agreement.

Researcher  
So that is there some element of competitive comparison between universities on the basis of funding allocation or is is it just a case like this-

[M2]

Yeah. Yes, you've been mentioning these doctoral students, for example, the third party fund, the the public and programme based funding. These are competitive elements that are not that large in the funding formula. As you already stated, but it's one larger pool and larger amount of money where the other universities are aiming at and this is also smaller pool of a small amount of money where u- universities of arts can compete for it. And especially when this group is smaller, I think the universities of art we sometimes also hear in the accompanying talks that there is at least at indirect rivalry for these funds, but let me mention one more important point when we come to the profiles, I would say that these funds are not primarily going into the profiles for university, since it's quantitatively small and more important, I would say is the third party funding from the Fund for Wissenschafts- for for the funds or for basic research. So for the from the Science Fund and the Science Fund, is is having also performance agreements with our Ministry, and this is giving grants like the ERC in in, in comparable amount like also like your project for example is also in this category from from funding from funding amount in sum[?]. And it's also like for blue sky for more years and, has intensive peer review behind, and this peer review is is running within these funds so there the Ministry is not directly involved, it's I would say from allocating third party funds, it's also steering at the distance. So this this is an agency that is is doing it for for Austria, it’s comparable maybe in in some aspects to the Higher Education Funding Council in England.

Researcher

Right and that's also included in the performance agreements or its?

[M2]  
That the projects are maybe included, but it's it's not funded with this. So if if you mention these, often universities do mention these projects also the ERC projects within the within the performance agreement. But it's clear that there is no direct funding attached to this.

Researcher

Right right. So you think that's a great element of prestige for profiling.

[M2]

Hm-hm that's right. But I would say as you as you mentioned in in just in brackets that the the the budget is is that it's just helping universities for for coming, for having revenues. It's not always like this. If you have a large project, there might be also sponsored from the global budget and and this is sometimes interlinked. But with the new cost and the performance accounting this should, the these these flows should be at least transparent for us. But previously we didn't know anything about this, and I think larger projects sometimes can also well be supported by global budgets or sometimes there will be like from a financial aspect that could be a zero-sum game at some universities for some projects, but in in some with the prestige as you mentioned the scientific prestige, this is clearly an advantage to have an ERC grant for example. So I would have been, I really wouldn't deny this, that's for sure ((laughing)).

Researcher

I'm sorry, like um what you mentioned basic researcher ‘Wissenschafts-’ so you said is that monitored then by the BMBWF as well, or because you said that was also steering at a distance.

[M2]

Yes, there are performance agreement with this, with this basic research fund. And the the these performance agreements are relatively new. I think it's the second period that they are working, but it's the research department that are concluding this agreement. So I don't know further details.

Researcher

Okay, but that’s separate.

[M2]

Separate from the performance agreements. These are also performance agreements. It's called performance agreements, but it's a separate performance agreement between universities and it's a separate performance agreement between Ministry and this fund.

Researcher

OK, alright. Um so can I ask you, this new finance system was implemented in 2018 or it fully implemented 2019? Um how did this differ from the old system and why was it changed or introduced?

[M2]

One main point was that this study, this funding for study places as we called it once[?]. Now it's a university funding new this has got a new label, but it has been labeled similarly to the funding that that has been functioning for 25 years for the universities of applied sciences, where only studied places are funded from the federal sources and the other um um um um the other topics that they are doing at universities of applied sciences have to be funded separately, like this is normally not from the Ministry. But let me come to the universities. It changed as you mentioned in 2018 for the period of 19 until 2021, and there have been major fiscal stimulus for universities decided on in 2017 by the Parliament. But the Parliament had had stipulated that there should be a new a new funding model also with with this until the beginning of 2018. And the the in in in, in in principle this study places funding had been negotiated between the coalition parties of Social Democrats and the Conservatives before 2017, like the model was already there, but the funding had been decided by a Social Democrats, Greens and Freedom Party, and this had been in opposition to the before crash coalition with the People's Party.

So the People's Party didn't decide also on this. Because it it it, it came too early for them to to have these funding implemented and previously they had demised their Vice Chancellor in early 2017 in May and this had been the chance from the change from Mitterlehner to Kurz, and in 2017 Kurz had been elected with the People's Party with with large majority I think. And then they formed the coalition with the Freedom Party and, let me come back to the details of the funding formula. It had been largely changed because, it had been the fiscal stimulus with it previously there had been ideas for this funding formula already since 2013, and it had been as well at attempt to fix it within the University Act in 2014 with within an another revised revision of the law.

But it didn't work with the [?] with the Ministry of Finance, so that might Ministry of Finance and was not able to allocate the the the suitable amount to make this system function, it had it should have been a larger surplus. So the implementation had been postponed somehow. And then 2017 the Parliament had decided on these funds. On the technical side, the indicators that had changed was largely the second pillar like the research staff and the research staff this has, this is a new indicator, like it's an input-based indicator as as as as as might be obvious. It's, uh, existing staff at the universities that is funded for three years also weighted by subject groups and the active students, they have been already there, but they had been there for large for a much smaller for a much smaller fraction of whole budgets within so-called structural funds of higher education. The structural funds had also been there for the third party funding and for the doctoral schools. And also to a smaller amount for some projects from universities that are funded within the performance agreement period from the Ministry, but where there are separate calls for it. So it is this call, this is already published I think for this years for this year again and the universities are are applying will apply for this until autumn and, but this is just 40 million of whole budget. So 12.3 billion is the whole budget and 40 million is this call. So this is just a very small fraction, but it's called strategic incentives and and from the Ministry's view and it's, it's a more direct incentive to cover project costs than within the performance agreement, where it is really a steering at the distance.

Researcher  
But sorry, sorry. I'm like is this, it's it's great. I mean, you're so knowledgeable on this, but it's, some of it's a little bit over my head.

[M2]

Yeah, sure.

Researcher

So the the calculations *do* form part of the performance agreement, though.

[M2]

The calculations of the formula?

Researcher

Yeah, or they don't, it's a separate thing?

[M2]

We calculate it. It's it's it's intertwined because we calculate it then it's sent to the universities as a proposal, but um not as a performance agreement, it's sent with the performance agreement proposal. But basically it's it's within, it's not within one document because it's the performance agreements with all the projects and this, but the budget section is left empty and then you have the the separate budget paper. You could say where you have a a draft for this budget paper that you that the rector of the university and head of [unit] also signs, and this draft is then seen by the university and commented mostly commented. And then in the performance agreement and negotiation which takes normally two rounds, because first there is an informal round and then there is the formal round within the negotiation, um they can receive um additional amounts to this to this proposal that they have been, because um the Minister is also obliged to keep 2% of all whole university budget on the side before um um after calculating these funds for the for the formula.

Researcher  
OK. So it's kind of part of the same process, even if it's different instruments as such.

[M2]

Hm-hm. In the performance agreement negotiations, then they come together again and there is this budget sheet you could say and the numbers from the budget sheets that is finished. Then with the additional funds with the um um result from the negotiation. This is taken over to the performance agreement and published like this. Like the performance agreement is published and the the budget paper you could say is not published. It's a paper between the the university and the Ministry. It has just two two sides to pages and sometimes it is a little more detailed than the performance agreement like for what the funds are and so. But in in sum the performance agreement reflects the the budgetary situation of the university.

Researcher  
Alright, well, what exactly is the purpose of the university development plan? I mean, I understand like it's a strategic plan, and it has to kind of be I guess it has to be in alignment with the national development plan.

[M2]

Hm-hm that's true.

Researcher  
Umm so it's what? How would you define it? How how would you define the purpose of the university development plan if you were to describe it?

[M2]

Yeah. If you connect it with the performance agreement, then the most important part from the funding perspective is that staff details are first published within the development plan. So before we we know how to how we could fund some staff which is from the universities, it's formulated within the development plan from the universities. Usually these numbers are quite higher than the the the funds we could allocate for this pillar, but it's a kind of internal development perspective for universities where they they define which uh, um um subjects will be most expanded within the next six years, bec- this is also a newer development like since seven years just, it's not the whole 15 years where universities got autonomy, and for the last seven years they have to formulate these development plans for a period of six years.

But it's um revised after three years like before the performance agreements, it's like a rotating process, a revolving process that is going on every three years, but in basis now they have development plans until 2027 and yeah, that the staffing aspects are the main aspect, but they also have more broad content for the whole development of of interaction with society, for example, or within uh teaching plans. They are also included within the development plan and this alignment with other strategic document, for example documents for example, as the whole Austrian University development plan. This is also worked out within a university development plan then, like you can see the priorities within the national plan also within the development plans, or at least you should, but sometimes it's it it's just mentioned like a footnote, but in in other cases you can see a more detailed integration, I would say just as a as a little glance for the development plans, but I can't really judge development plans because this is because this is an instrument for universities in autonomy. So this is an autonomous document and it's mostly important how how fits internally.

Researcher  
So how about the national development plan, then? And so it was written into the the 2002 in in 2018, subject paragraph 12B or something. So how how did it come about that now of the Ministry had to start producing a kind of development plan for the whole of public universities in Austria. But I mean that's, so far 3 have been produced, haven’t they. So before then, they weren't being produced. So how how did this become law?

[M2]  
It has been has been connected with the basic duty of the Ministry to coordinate the the Austrian higher education system. So to align the university sector with the universities of applied sciences sector with the private universities and also with the new colleges for teacher education that also got higher education status, I think five years ago or so or a little more, seven years maybe.

Umm and, yeah, how it came into being. I think we could see some [?] commitment of the Ministry to to tell the universities that they have a real stake into higher education development within Austria, not just the individual universities, but there should be a also a coordinated approach within universities to to have a say on on the development of higher education sector, not just university sector maybe, but also higher education sector.

And there is also a new instrument in developing in the developing status. This is the higher education development plan, so this should be the the integrated plan for the whole for the whole higher education sector. And yeah, it it has been, maybe it is also because this comes more from my research and from my professional expertise that there are cyclical things[?] of engagement from from universities within the the whole education’s the whole higher education sector, in 1993, which has been an important date and important year because it has been um marking some developments for the 2002 reform. There had already been decided on on partly autonomous institutions, but from literature I could see that universities really were in in opposition against this law and originally they wanted to have it formulated more like like much more into a new public management direction.

But I think in the coalition um um, um negotiations between the People's Party and the Social Democrats that were ruling then it it got reduced somehow this new public management orientation. And then in 2002 the the new coalition coalition government took took the motivation to to decide on this new law. And how did I come there? Umm.

Researcher

[Redacted identifying information]

[M2]

Um the the greater importance of academic autonomy you mean, of of this, of this part of the autonomy dimensions. It I think it has been, it is connected to a reform in 1997 that has been also taken it there universities got nearly full autonomy in and in defining their study programs where study program content had not have been approved by the Ministry but instead university senate got got strengthened for this for this competencies and well we could say that study program

um um content decision was entirely with with, with the senate already in 1997, before giving universities formal whole autonomy 2002, and this I wanted to finish, and I can remember the 2002 was also the year where universities engaged most, much more strongly into the legislation process. So when when it came, became clear that new University Act will will will become into being universities like the rectorates the senates, too, but yeah, the rectorates and the senate, this was mainly, the university council was was not that strong at this time. They really engaged for this act and their academic autonomy. I think it was strengthened with we already within with in 1997 and then 2002 we could have seen this output like in the legislation, partly. This, this could be one reason.

Another reason was maybe that the other autonomy dimension, that the that was so strong in 1993, like the organizational autonomy that there had been already enough reforms on this. In in the 10 years between uh implemented while implementing this reform and the 2020- 2002, there had not been the focus on this organizational organizational autonomy again because it has had been already obvious that universities had reformed like stronger rectorates stronger deans also that were working together with the rectorates, and also it had been planned that the university council should be strengthened against the senate. Because university council should also be appointed by external experts and with this making universities more responsive to to society. But in the 20 years up to now, I would say that university council is still searching partly for his role, especially as what, what financial duties is, is, is, especially connected when when financial duties are shown, are looked at.

Researcher

I'm sorry, am I right thinking like the university council is comprised of four members appointed from the university, four appointed from the federal government by the federal government and a ninth member that they together they together appoint together.

[M2]

Yeah that's right.

Researcher

And the the reasoning behind, you just mentioned the reasoning behind the appointment from the federal government is to make it more responsive to society or?

[M2]

This this part is is making it more responsive to the government. But the other four experts are are are nominated by the university itself. So this I I would say that this was the the more precise jump into the autonomy, you could say like to to have these universities stronger.

Researcher

That was already in 1993. Are you saying that this was or that was?

[M2]

A kind of university council it had been already there in 1993, but it had not these formal rights that they had since 2002. So it had been really formally strengthened with the 2002 act. Also, what, you know what rectorate appointment, especially, umm, concerns.

[Redacted identifying information]

Researcher

OK, I'm wondering if you happen to know, um because you're so well versed and you know, in in these legal frameworks and you know in the in paragraph 63a8 in the The Universities Act 2002,

um universities are allowed to restrict student numbers for foreign language programs, so academic programs say in English, they can actually restrict student numbers, which they can't do for German. I know they they do in other ways and and universities can get round this whatever[?]. But the actual the actual paragraph allows you to restrict student numbers for English language programs. And I was wondering if if you kind of had some idea why that might be, that they allow restriction of numbers of students? Have you ever come across anything?

[M2]

Maybe there, I'm just speculating, but maybe there is the background that it is to ensure reasonable uh teacher-student ratios within these programs and to have this already stipulated by law because um university sometimes could expand really quickly for um programs that are entirely taught in English. And this is to ensure that universities also think about the resources, it could be to ensure that universities think also about the resources that this new student study program um bind[?] when they have, when you have to design it for foreign students, for example.

But for a a from a financial point of view and the the there is no large difference for student fees between domestic students and foreign students. It's it's, yeah, it's double. That's that's true, like from this perspective it could be much. It depends from whether [?] student comes from in in normal terms like from for the Austrian price level it's not that high. It's 800 Euros per semester, and as you've already mentioned, the the whole universities, the whole possibilities for universities to to formulate restrictions to access after the Matura had been expanding also for the last year. So there are more programs that are now fixed number where they are fixed numbers within the law already now like psychology, communications sciences, political science etcetera. Yeah, find it,

you can find it in the UG.

Researcher

I mean the psychology and things like that relates to Germany as well. It doesn't the influx.

[M2]

That's true.

Researcher

But other subject areas have less of a bearing than on on Germany, I guess. So that they-

[M2]

I also would say that this is more a domestic student income input program. And especially especially within law.

Researcher

Is this like a changing ideology, changing like principle because you had like 'freier Hochschulzugang'

Is is this something that is shifting its focus and and this is why it's becoming increasingly restrictive in it in the UG, or is it? Where do you see this coming from?

[M2]

It goes, it goes a little into this direction. So when we look at the coalition parties that have been deciding on the last um um um on this major funding articles within the UG that has been the People's Party and the Freedom Party, and Social Democrats were not in. So Social Democrats were principally always those that were saying that we need equal access to universities and to a higher education in general. And so like this, this had been a tendency for the last years and of the years between 2018 and 2020, I would say, but in 2020 the government changed again and but but the the the science and research agendas was was still with the People's Party. So in in basic, in in principle the University Act had not been changed in these aspects.

So it it had not been more restrictive also since then, but but there were some also restrictions, stronger restrictions within student law like you have to have at least 4 credits per year I think to not getting ex- matric- matriculated within a university so not not to be thrown out. This is becomes effective I think with the winter semester 2022. So to sum up, I would say that there is, yeah, a tendency. Yeah, but it's not, not, not really, not really that strong when you look at the systemic level, and for some universities, depending on their subject um composition, it might be stronger. But as you you look at the Universities of the Arts for example, they are overall restricted in access, I think or mostly. And public universities.

Yeah, if you basically, if you still if you still had the Matura you could join, so you would find a field of study where you could come in and this is also coming also from the background then that, that there are many inactive students or many students that are not really some making credit points within within their study year, and that Austria has this this specific difficulty of active students, yeah, maybe.

Researcher

Do you know if, some people I talked to um you know they they have this assumption that the BA you know must be in German to the extent that they think it's like a law. But then other people have told me no, it's not a law. So the sense that, are you aware of anything at all in the legal framework that would safeguard the BAs actually being in German, the the undergraduate degrees actually being in German? They don't have to be in German, do they?

[M2]

No, I don't. I don't think so, really.

Researcher

And yet, people have quite a normative kind of reaction to it, like they have this reaction like, no, they have to be in German to the extent they even think it's in law, even though it's not in law. So I'm wondering, is there anything that would prevent English encroaching on BA programs?

Umm, in terms of them, you know, I don't know even if you're talking about taxpayers or, you know, dealings with the Ministry, would it be negatively evaluated if say, at your university you started to to offer more programs at BA level in English? Is there anything that protects German at BA level Is my question really?

[M2]

Difficult to say. I didn't hear anything about it directly. So I I would leave it like this, but there is, there is a debate for from the Austrian ‘Wissenschaftsrat’ that that, this is a Advisory Council for the Minister, which published seven years ago or so it's it's an older publication, a small booklet I have here that was formulating some science historic and science philosophic points to to not not fully integrating English or just integrating English within study within uni within university work, so within research or within teaching or at the general level, because this could could also restrict the the, the, the, the, the, the so so-called domestic people, people speaking and writing in other languages to to to have access to international um um um publications and to international renomme.

So I'll also would say [redacted identifying information] is like this is going to the direction of world class university like you have to have a ranked journals and really, really good impact factors, and this is a trend that this was really a actual current really, really current trend 15 years ago in Austria maybe, but maybe the, the, the main political strengths/trends[?] have changed a little like since then, it's more it's more again maybe on inclusion.

And it's also more on on on also having on local impact or at least a national impact for universities that that is is a little more on the on the on the agenda now that in Austria at least compared to 10 years ago? Maybe, umm.

Researcher

[Redacted identifying information]

Do you happen to know at doctoral level, my case study university that I'm not allowed to mention the name of, they introduced increasing restrictions um a few years ago for for doctoral studies and um but I I believe, I'm not entirely sure about that, that was the university's own choice because I haven't seen it, in the UG I already mentioned, there haven't been any additional clauses have there about this, that it already mentions that you're allowed to restrict at doctoral level?

[M2]

Yeah, these are principle paragraphs on this, and it's more tightly specified within the intellectual capital reports, which again relates to the funding. So if you want to have these additional funding for the doctoral programs, it's not a large fraction, I think it's 1.1% of the whole university budget that it's allocated before these 2% deduction for the Minister the that we have in reserve. But but still this this is some incentive for universities from the financial side to have the doctoral programs more structured. This is to say that you have a agreement for the PhD that it's that it's like the clear commitment from the supervisor also to have this doctoral student and to make doctoral students have a more informed choice on the topic, for example, also to have a supervisor to have the project presentation of the of the of the doctoral project and then also have to to have annual reports and also be within a doctoral school, for example, to have a regular exchange on the on the doctoral project. So in sum to have well more binding commitment from from from supervisors I think especially and from the institution behind the supervisor to have the doctorate that's also getting finished that they tried to take in.

Researcher

Right. So it's got nothing to do with the law. It's got to do with the steering at distance, basically, the funding allocation.

[M2]

Umm, this is the stronger incentive yeah I would say that it's like this. This has been in the law for a longer time, but the the, the, the, the the funding incentive is here since 2012. So it's it's a newer development. Maybe it was also to stronger, more strongly articulate this this, this, this paragraph in the UG.

Researcher

Well, that that's kind of what I mean, like this shift, I mean, I know it's not entirely in the UG. So that like you were saying that this shift away from being like being able to go to university and being able to continue through, the only thing I could I could only find one clause in the UG which was about actually continuing from the BA program to a master's without any qualitative requirements in the same or a related subject area which doesn't have to be exactly the same. But there was this principle still in there of of of allowing people to progress, whereas with these increasing restrictions the the kind of ideology seems to be shifting, but I get I get, but that's not necessarily from the the UG, but it's related to other factors as well.

[M2]

Umm, one more systemic factor that comes into my mind now is that also federal funding law has changed and years ago and it has come more from input orientation to an outcome orientation. The federal funding law is is now more oriented toward towards outcome oriented steering and this had been not a new development compared to other OECD countries in in 2013. But universities are already had to try some, some, some, some instruments from this, from the 1993 law. So maybe we could see the, the, the university sector as a as a as a innovative umm smaller policy um um subsystem a policy subsystem where um um newer instruments from outcome oriented steering are are are tried out.

And then if if we could say if they somehow succeeded, it it it, it could inspire other policy um decisions, I wouldn't say that University Act really were decisive for these fiscal policy changes in 2013, there were really much international pressure for this, I think and also a with a window of opportunity for the Social Democrats then to have disagreed with the with the Financial Minister with which had been always in the hands and the People's Party in the new Millennium. But all in all, there could be some cross connections, yeah, [redacted identifying information]. It's just one one one lens[?], I would say.

So this this kind of ideology, I would say overall this this is I think it's obvious in liberal capitalism everywhere that um state funding is not substantially there for everybody. But it's, uh, it's getting more focused. And some some some groups are could also hear that there is no more money for them. This is this might be also new from from a state perspective, but it's a development like 40 years and I think it started in the UK also, maybe it started in the UK or in New Zealand with new public management like new public management [redacted identifying information] but but with much with a much broader agenda.

[Redacted identifying information]

Researcher

Yeah. Yeah. I'm so sorry. I've I've taken up quite a lot of your time. So um I hope? Sorry, can I just turn[?] very small question?

[M2]

Yeah, sure.

Researcher

Like you know this Unidata database is, is that compiled on the basis of the ‘Wissensbilanz’ well from different universities. You know the database um, in the section on Bologna monitoring, there's a separate category for appointments from Germany to the other EU countries. And I was wondering if you might happen to know why it is that Germany is given a separate category for the collation of data umm for appointments for Bologna monitoring.

[M2]

Umm this this might have to could be connected to the study fields that were really filled with German students, but I don't know really. So I'm not, I'm not an expert on the on the database. I know what is there, but I don't have to overview why certain categories are more highlighted than others when when it's not coming to the funding system. Yeah, I could ask it for this. I have a colleague in the Statistics division and then I will send you these two links and also the answer for this.

Researcher

Oh brilliant. Yeah, or if you if you just sent me an e-mail, I could ask someone directly. Because I mean one thing that interests us because obviously we're looking at, you know, the increase of English is to what extent this is counterbalanced by other forces. And obviously if you're getting appointments also from Germany and a lot of them, then this could serve to some extent to counterbalance, you know, the the English language programmes. That's the only reason I'm asking, but it interested me that it had a separate category um because there must be a reason for this. Not not that it's necessarily it's it's strategic, but just for this is either you know whether it's strategic or whether it's for the purpose of monitoring and why it's being monitored as a separate category that would, yeah interest me.

[M2]

Yeah. Maybe sometimes it is said that the Germans are coming like the researchers and the students and that then when they are coming from Germany that this is not really internationalization. So this, this, this could be one one point of of of populist statement on this, but I sometimes heard it from universities indirectly. Umm, not not officially, but indirectly.

And sometimes there there is, there could be also fears that the the, the Germans are are still quantitatively more. They could have have the better post at universities or more posts at universities. So this has is connected with university policies I would university politics I would say, and it's not really not really a governance issue. I would be surprised if if the colleague from my statistics division would would would tell something like this.

Researcher

No I'm just curious. You know what why it is that. Obviously the the data are being collected by the Ministry as a separate category. So I'm just curious what the reason, what the reason for that is so.

[M2]

Yeah, yeah sure.

Researcher

Yeah. No, thanks so much for so much. I need to get back to your articles to understand it a bit better.

[M2]

Yes, sometimes. I also tend to to talk on on on some points very long, and then I get connected to other points and that this is not not not always connecting them to your main answers. Maybe. But you are still um um um satisfied I think. And it was OK. It was nice to talk to you.

Researcher

Thank you so much. No you you mentioned so many things actually that were related to anyway to questions I would have asked so I just went with the flow of the conversation, so ((laughing))

[M2]

Great. OK.

Researcher

Thank you so much for your time again.